

# Angelina College Technical Standards for Surgical Technology Students

The Surgical Technology program at Angelina College requires students to meet certain technical standards to ensure they can perform the essential functions necessary for success in both the educational setting and future professional practice. These standards are vital for ensuring patient safety and maintaining the high level of competency expected in the field.

## 1. Physical Abilities

- **Stamina:** Must be able to stand for extended periods (up to 6-8 hours) during surgical procedures and maintain focus and accuracy.
- **Strength:** Must be capable of lifting and moving surgical instruments, equipment, and patients (with assistance when necessary). This may include lifting items up to 50 pounds.
- **Mobility:** Must be able to move efficiently in the surgical environment, which may involve bending, reaching, twisting, and moving quickly between different locations in the operating room.
- **Dexterity:** Must have fine motor skills to handle delicate instruments, suture materials, and other equipment with precision.

## 2. Sensory Abilities

- **Visual Acuity:** Must be able to accurately read monitors, small print on surgical instruments, and recognize color-coded systems (e.g., medications, sterile fields).
- **Hearing:** Must be able to hear and comprehend verbal instructions from the surgical team, monitor sounds from equipment (such as alarms), and respond to sounds or alerts in the operating room.
- **Tactile Ability:** Must possess tactile sensitivity sufficient to assess instruments, suture materials, and tissues during surgical procedures.

## 3. Cognitive Abilities

- **Critical Thinking:** Must be able to think critically and quickly under pressure to adapt to changes in surgical situations and patient needs. This includes recognizing problems and taking appropriate action.
- **Memory and Recall:** Must be able to recall procedural steps, instrumentation, and patient care guidelines from memory, especially in fast-paced and high-stress situations.
- **Time Management:** Must be able to manage time effectively, prioritize tasks, and function efficiently in a dynamic environment where timing is crucial.

#### 4. Communication Skills

- **Verbal Communication:** Must be able to clearly and effectively communicate with the surgical team, instructors, and patients using appropriate medical terminology.
- **Non-Verbal Communication:** Must understand and interpret non-verbal cues from patients and other healthcare professionals, especially when responding to critical situations.
- **Documentation:** Must be able to accurately document patient information, surgical notes, and instrument counts according to facility and program protocols.

#### 5. Emotional and Mental Stability

- **Stress Management:** Must be able to function effectively in high-stress, fast-paced situations while maintaining composure, concentration, and professionalism.
- **Emotional Resilience:** Must be able to handle emotionally taxing situations, such as exposure to traumatic injuries, surgeries with uncertain outcomes, and patient care emergencies.
- **Professionalism:** Must maintain professional boundaries and ethical behavior in all interactions, both with patients and other members of the healthcare team.

#### 6. Interpersonal Skills

- **Teamwork:** Must work collaboratively with the surgical team, displaying respect, understanding, and support in a high-stakes environment.
- **Patient Interaction:** Must engage respectfully with patients, demonstrating empathy and understanding while ensuring patient comfort and safety.

#### 7. Safety and Infection Control

- **Sterile Technique:** Must be able to understand, apply, and maintain sterile technique throughout surgical procedures to prevent contamination and infection.
- **Infection Control:** Must be able to follow protocols for personal protective equipment (PPE), hand hygiene, and handling hazardous materials to ensure patient and self-safety.

#### 8. Ethical and Legal Standards

- **Ethical Decision-Making:** Must demonstrate a strong ethical foundation, including confidentiality, honesty, and responsibility in all professional and academic settings.
  - **Legal Compliance:** Must be aware of and comply with all relevant healthcare laws, regulations, and standards, including patient rights and OSHA guidelines.
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**Note:** Students requesting accommodations for any of these standards should contact Angelina College's Disability Services Office to explore potential adjustments, provided they do not compromise patient safety or the integrity of the program.

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These technical standards are designed to ensure that students can meet the physical, emotional, and intellectual demands of the Surgical Technology program while maintaining a high level of competency and professionalism.